

Islington Greener Together Champions

VOLUNTEER STORY

"It's like a tiny oasis instead of a barren plain of paving slabs." - Talia Hussein, Islington Resident



Islington Together
for a greener future



Making Islington Greener

In partnership with Islington Council, Groundwork London provides opportunities for local residents to volunteer with the Islington Greener Together Champions (IGTC) programme.

The IGTC programme taps into the enthusiasm of Islington residents to plant and maintain new green spaces, find new opportunities for greening, act on climate change and transform neighbourhoods.

The programme provides:

- ✓ Resources: Materials, guides, and tools designed to support volunteering efforts and initiatives.
- ✓ Support: Our team is available to answer questions, and offer advice and assistance.
- ✓ Training: Tailored workshops to enhance knowledge and skills in sustainability, community engagement, and more.
- ✓ Champions Network: Connecting volunteers, sharing ideas, and collaborating on projects to create a supportive community of changemakers.



MEET TALIA

ISLINGTON GREENER TOGETHER CHAMPION

Talia, an Islington resident for over 20 years, has long been passionate about environmental causes. Living in the Canonbury area, she became involved in local campaigns, including cycling initiatives and air quality advocacy.

Talia joined the Islington Greener Together Champions (IGTC) programme to address a local issue—fly-tipping and the neglect of a large, underutilised space in her neighbourhood. Talia saw an opportunity to transform this area into a space for the community.

My goal was to make it feel more like a community space and design out undesirable behaviours, like fly-tipping.





BEFORE



AFTER

How did people in the local area get involved?

Talia and her neighbours collaborated to reimagine the area, a long, bare stretch of pavement.

“During the planning phase, people were interested and we shared updates through our local WhatsApp group. We shared polls about what we could have in the space, like a bench, and people voted. They got involved and had their say.”

How has the project impacted the local community?

The transformation began with the addition of plants and a bench, creating what Talia describes as a “tiny oasis” amidst the concrete. The space was completed in Spring 2024.

The space now attracts dog walkers, neighbours, and passersby, turning a once-neglected area into a community hub. “It’s not just a place people pass through anymore,” Talia shares. The small interactions - waving, and saying hello - help foster a stronger sense of belonging and connection in the neighbourhood.

“Now, it’s like a tiny oasis instead of a barren plain of paving slabs.”



What were some of the challenges and achievements?

“There are still issues with rubbish and fly-tipping but it feels like it has reduced and I know it will take more time to change but it is heading in the right direction.”

Her biggest reward? Watching the space become a place of connection rather than just an intersection.

“There's a sense of accomplishment once you've pulled all the weeds out and got it looking good. But the thing I enjoy is seeing people using the space and seeing people in the neighbourhood. It feels less like an area that people pass through but a place to actually spend time, which is what I get pleasure in.”

Looking ahead...

Talia plans to continue maintaining the space a little bit at a time and encourages others to get involved in the community. Her advice to potential volunteers:

“Start small, involve the community, and remember that even small changes can make a big difference.”

Do you want to join the Islington Greener Together Programme?

Register via our website: groundwork.org.uk/london/all-london-projects/islington-greener-together-champions/



Islington Greener Together Champions is joint funded by Islington Council and Future Parks Accelerator.